

MINUTES
SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES COUNCIL
MARCH 29, 2006
PALMYRA, VIRGINIA

PATTY GILBERTSON
CHAIR

MEMBERS/DELEGATES PRESENT:

Inge Tracy, Department of Corrections
Rudi Schuster, Department of Criminal Justice Services
James Ashton, Department of Education
Janice Hicks, Department of Health
Ken Batten, Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services
Vickie Johnson-Scott, Department of Social Services
Hope Merrick, Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention
Joseph Battle, Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA)
Jennie Springs-Amison, Substance Abuse Certification Alliance of Virginia (SACAVA)
Jennifer Johnson, Virginia Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors
Chuck Walsh, Virginia Association of Community Services Boards (VACSB)
Jim May, Ph.D., VACSB
Freddie Simons, Prevention Task Force, VACSB
Will Williams, Substance Abuse Services Council, VACSB
Mike Fragala, Virginia Association of Drug and Alcohol Programs
Patty Gilbertson, Virginia Drug Court Association
Ryant Washington, Virginia Sheriffs' Association
Henry Harper, Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation

STAFF:

Mellie Randall, DMHMRSAS
Lynette Bowser, DMHMRSAS
Marc Goldberg, DMHMRSAS

GUESTS:

Mark Blackwell, SAARA

I. GREETING AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:10 A.M., and the chairperson asked those in attendance to introduce themselves. The chairperson recognized new members Hope Merrick and Henry Harper to the Council. Mr. Harper indicated that he was filling in for Tammy Brown, who will be the regular delegate from VTSF. She also thanked Council member Sheriff Ryant Washington for the use of his facility for the Council meeting.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY 25, 2006 MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Fragala and seconded by Mr. Walsh to approve the minutes of the January 25, meeting. The motion was carried.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ON 2006 SESSION

Mark Blackwell informed the Council that SJR 106 passed. This bill establishes a commission to study sections of the current Code of Virginia (§37.2-415 and 37.2- 506) that prohibit employment of persons convicted of certain crimes from employment in certain human service fields, including addictions counseling, and how it effects employers and the recovery community. It will be a two-year study by a joint commission with various stakeholders involved in the study. Ms. Randall offered to send the study language to members.

Ken Batten informed the Council that SB 602, which focused on allowing an exception to §37.2-415 was for one specific individual had failed in subcommittee.

Mr. Batten also stated that the Medicaid initiative is not in either the House or Senate versions of the budget, nor had it been included in the Governor's budget.

The Governor's Budget includes one item submitted by the Office of Substance Abuse Services, which is crisis stabilization services, and this initiative is included in both House and Senate versions.

The Senate budget bill includes \$1.1 million to fund two buprenorphine demonstration initiatives. The status of that initiative will not be known until there is an agreement between the House and the Senate on the state budget.

Patty Gilbertson stated that the three proposals regarding the drug court were included in the Governor's budget, and all three were making progress in both the House and the Senate. The request for funding of 14 drug courts remains in the budget. The Senate budget includes the Supreme Courts amendment for two additional drug courts.

Freddie Simon informed the Council that the VACSB submitted a budget request to fund 15 prevention programs to target youth and families across the state at a cost of \$2.25 million, however, the request did not make it out of committee.

The Chairperson thanked Mark Blackwell and Joe Battle for SAARA's advocacy at the General Assembly this year.

B. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVISE BYLAWS

This item was deferred until the next meeting. Amendments will be sent out to Council members for comment and review and action will be taken at the next meeting. The Chair asked that Council members e-mail any comments on the amendments to John Gibney or Scott Reiner.

C. OTHER OLD BUSINESS

The Chairperson asked that a letter be drafted to thank legislators for their actions on the Council's behalf, whether or not the issue passed or failed.

The Chairperson provided members with a training announcement on a national summit on methamphetamine abuse, to be held in June in Florida.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. DEVELOPMENT OF COUNCIL WORK PLAN FOR 2006

Ms. Randall informed the members that the Council's Annual Report is due to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources for review on September 1, and due to the General Assembly by October 1. Ms. Randall presented major themes of the last two reports as themes for this year's report, as follows:

- Cost-off Sets
- Evidence Based Practices – Treatment and Prevention
- Treatment Data
- Prevention Data
- Workforce Development
- VASAP Project
- Funding (Medicaid, Insurance Issues, General Funds, and other)

Ms. Randall gave an explanation for each theme. She posted general outlines for each theme on newsprint around the room and asked Council members to review the themes and, using post-it notes, attach notes, questions, or comments regarding the theme. Ms. Randall stated this process would help focus of the annual report.

Time was allotted for members to write comments, questions, etc. and attach those to each theme. Ms. Randall reviewed the comments, questions, etc. to get clarification, and ask for questions or clarifications for each comment. Ms. Randall will electronically send out a document for each theme that includes the comments and questions.

Committees were established for each theme to flush out the comments/questions and develop a first draft. Ms. Randall stated that the end product for each of these major themes is a three to five page report that could be edited and put together in to a council a report.

Ms. Randall went over the time line and asked that the first draft from the committees be sent to her, electronically by May 4. She will then have the committees responses put together to present for discussion at the Council meeting on May 11. It is expected the annual report should be pretty close to final by the Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 8. The final draft report will then be submitted to the Secretary on or before September 1.

Note: Attached to the minutes are the themes with the comments, etc. and the members of the committee assigned to each theme. [Note: This attachment was previously emailed to members of the Council for input.]

Patty Gilbertson, Chairperson, had to leave the meeting early and with her departure Will Williams presided over the meeting.

B. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Randall stated that DMHMRSAS has allocated a very small amount of funding to develop a media campaign focusing on reducing the stigma of addiction. Ms. Randall has been working with DMHMRSAS' legislative and public relations director to contract with a public relations firm to help design a stigma reduction campaign. The funding will largely support the design of the campaign. Ms. Randall stated that the initial focus would target the faith-based community in the Richmond Metropolitan area as a pilot audience, with a roll out in Recovery Month (September).

V. MEMBER REPORTS

Rudi Schuster suggested adding a Council membership from the Board of Professional Counselors (which certifies substance abuse counselors and licenses Licensed Substance Abuse Treatment Professionals). Ms. Randall suggested that the Council might want to consider amending the Code to include adding a representative from the Department of Health Professions (where the Board of Counselors resides) to the Council, so that other health care professionals (physicians, nurses, pharmacists, psychologists, social workers) would also be included.

VI. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for May 11 in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Ms. Randall will send out information regarding the exact time and place.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Lynette T. Bowser